

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMCONSUL LUBUMBASHI

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY LISBON

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

USICA WASHDC

AMEMBASSY BRAZZAVILLE

USINT HAVANA

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

AMEMBASSY BANJUL

AMCONSUL BUKAVU

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY BANGUI

AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA

AMEMBASSY KIGALI

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY BONN

USMISSION USNATO

AMEMBASSY MASERU

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AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY VICTORIA

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY COTONOU

AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

AMEMBASSY PRAIA

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI
AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY BERLIN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT OF STATE PRESS BRIEFING MAY 26, 1978

FOLLOWING IS AN UNOFFICIAL, UNCORRECTED EXCERPT FROM THE
DEPARTMENT OF STATE PRESS BRIEFING. IF NECESSARY OFFICIAL
VERSION WILL FOLLOW.

Q. YESTERDAY PRESIDENT CARTER SAID THAT CUBA BEARS A HEAVY
RESPONSIBILITY FOR WHAT HAPPENED IN ZAIRE AS WELL AS ANGOLA.
IN THE LAST WEEK, WE HAVE HAD REPEATED STATEMENTS FROM
CUBA, FROM CASTRO ON DOWN, SAYING THAT CUBA HAS NO CON-
NECTION, DIRECT OR INDIRECT, TO WHAT HAPPENED IN ZAIRE.
CAN YOU CITE TO US ANY EVIDENCE THAT CUBA WAS, IN FACT,
DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY INVOLVED? AND BY EVIDENCE, I MEAN
MORE THAN JUST STATEMENTS OR ASSERTIONS.
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A. NO. I AM GOING TO STICK WITH WHAT THE PRESIDENT SAID,
AND I AM STANDING ON WHAT I SAID A WEEK AGO.

Q. WELL, TOM, CAN YOU CLARIFY ONE THING? IS IT THE
CASE THAT THE CUBANS RECENTLY TRAINED THE KATANGESE WHO
INVADED, OR THAT THEY TRAINED THEM AT SOME POINT IN THE
PAST? BECAUSE WE HAVE HEARD BOTH VERSIONS FROM PRETTY
AUTHORITATIVE SOURCES.

A. THE CORRECT ANSWER IS RECENTLY.

Q. WELL, SOME SENIOR OFFICIALS IN THE STATE DEPARTMENT
DISAGREE.

A. IF YOU ARE REFERRING TO A SENIOR OFFICIAL IN
NEW YORK --

Q. YES.

A. -- THAT SENIOR OFFICIAL WAS NOT AWARE OF CERTAIN IN-
FORMATION WHICH WE HAD DOWN HERE IN WASHINGTON.

Q. COULD YOU GIVE US SOME IDEA OF WHEN THAT INFORMATION WAS RECEIVED? I MEAN, WAS IT THE SAME DAY?

A. WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON.

Q. OF WHEN? THIS WEEK?

A. YES.

Q. WAIT, THIS IS IN ADDITION TO WHAT YOU LEARNED AT THE WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM LAST FRIDAY MORNING THAT WAS THE BASIS OF YOUR RECENT STATEMENT? YOU ARE SAYING THAT THERE IS NOW, AS OF WEDNESDAY, ADDITIONAL INFORMATION SHOWING CUBAN INVOLVEMENT WITH THE REBELS?

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ADDITIONAL CONFIRMATION OF THE STATEMENT I MADE LAST FRIDAY.

Q. THAT THE TRAINING WAS RECENT?

A. THAT IS CORRECT.

Q. WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY "RECENT?" ARE YOU PUTTING A TIME ON THAT? IN SIX MONTHS, THREE MONTHS, 90 DAYS?

A. I DEALT WITH THAT. I DON'T HAVE AN ABSOLUTE TIME-FRAME. BUT IT WAS PRIOR TO THE SO-CALLED SHABA TWO, LEADING UP DIRECTLY TO IT.

Q. TOM, DID YOU FIND OUT WEDNESDAY THAT THE PRESIDENT SAID THAT WE BELIEVED THE CUBANS KNEW IN ADVANCE WHAT THEY WERE GOING TO DO AND DID NOTHING TO STOP THEM. IS THAT WHAT YOU FOUND OUT WEDNESDAY?

A. I AM NOT IN A POSITION TO DISCUSS THE PRECISE INFORMATION WITH YOU.

Q. DID YOUR INFORMATION THAT YOU GOT, ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON WEDNESDAY, GO BEYOND SIMPLY THE QUESTION OF TRAINING AND WHEN THAT TRAINING MIGHT HAVE TAKEN PLACE? DID IT GO BEYOND OR SUGGEST ANY FURTHER CONNECTION OTHER THAN TRAINING?

A. I AM NOT IN A POSITION TO DISCUSS THE INFORMATION.
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Q. TOM, THIS INFORMATION YOU HAVE IS VERY IMPORTANT, AND SO FAR THE ONLY THING WE HAVE ARE WORDS. THERE ARE TWO GOVERNMENTS SAYING CONTRADICTORY THINGS. WHY NOT LAY THE FACTS BEFORE THE PUBLIC FOR THE WHOLE WORLD TO SEE WHAT THE TRUTH IS?

A. I AM NOT IN A POSITION TO GO BEYOND WHAT I HAVE SAID WHAT THE PRESIDENT SAID YESTERDAY IN CHICAGO.

Q. TOM, DOES THIS ALSO APPLY TO THE CUBANS HAVING EQUIPPED, THAT IS TO SAY, ARMED THE KATANGESE INSURGENTS?

A: I AM GOING TO STAY WITH WHAT I SAID ON FRIDAY, WHICH WAS THAT THE INSURGENTS APPEARED TO BE USING SOVIET-MADE WEAPONS.

Q: WELL, WERE THEY GIVEN THE SOVIET-MADE WEAPONS BY THE CUBANS?

A: I DON'T KNOW THE ANSWER TO THAT QUESTION.

Q: THE REASON I ASK IS THAT AT THE WHITE HOUSE LAST WEEK JODY POWELL SAID THAT THE CUBANS HAD GIVEN SOVIET AND EAST EUROPEAN-MANUFACTURED WEAPONS TO THE KATANGESE.

A: I REALLY AM NOT INFORMED AS TO WHERE THEY GOT IT; BUT IF THAT IS WHAT THE WHITE HOUSE SAID, I ASSUME THAT'S CORRECT.

Q: WELL, YOU SAID THAT THEY RECEIVED WEAPONS FROM THE CUBANS.

A: AS I RECALL, WHAT I SAID WAS THAT IT WAS OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT THE INSURGENTS HAD BEEN RECENTLY TRAINED BY CUBANS IN ANGOLA AND THAT THEY WERE EMPLOYING SOVIET-UNCLASSIFIED

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MADE WEAPONS.

I REALLY DON'T KNOW WHO GAVE THEM THE WEAPONS.

Q: I THOUGHT YOU SAID THAT THE CUBANS SUPPLIED THEM WITH SOVIET-MADE WEAPONS.

A: I WOULD HAVE TO GO BACK AND CHECK OUT WHAT THE
TRANSCRIPT SAYS.

Q: SINCE YOU RECEIVED THIS NEWER INFORMATION ON
WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON, HAS THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT HAD
ANY CONTACT -- EITHER IN HAVANA OR THROUGH THE CUBAN
INTERESTS SECTION HERE IN WASHINGTON -- WITH THE
CUBAN GOVERNMENT RELATING TO THE SHABA PROVINCE SITUATION?

A: I DON'T KNOW

Q: ARE YOU AWARE OF A CIA REPORT CONDUCTED AT A LEVEL
LOWER THAN THE DIRECTOR, WHICH PROVES THAT THERE WAS NO
CUBAN DIRECT OR INDIRECT INVOLVEMENT IN THE SHABA INCIDENT?

A: I KNOW NOTHING ABOUT THAT. I SUGGEST YOU ASK THE CIA.

Q: DOES THE SECRETARY AGREE THAT A SALT AGREEMENT MAY BE
MORE DIFFICULT TO CONCLUDE AS A RESULT OF SOVIET HUMAN

RIGHTS ABUSES AND SOVIET MILITARY INVOLVEMENT IN AFRICA?

A: NO. I THINK THE POSITION ON THAT HASN'T CHANGED. WE
ARE NEGOTIATING THE SALT TREATY. THE CONCERN UPPERMOST
IN OUR MIND IS FOR THE SECURITY OF THE PEOPLE OF THE
UNITED STATES. THOSE NEGOTIATIONS ARE ONGOING.
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Q: WELL, THAT DOESN'T REALLY ANSWER THE QUESTION. I
MEAN, THE PRESIDENT SAID YESTERDAY THAT AN AGREEMENT COULD
BE MORE DIFFICULT TO CONCLUDE AS A RESULT OF SOVIET POLIC-
IES. THIS SEEMED TO INTRODUCE OR REINTRODUCE LINKAGE IN
A HARDER FORM THAN PREVIOUSLY.

A: I WOULD HAVE TO GO BACK AND CHECK TO SEE WHAT THE
PRESIDENT SAID PRECISELY ON THAT. BUT OBVIOUSLY THE
PRESIDENT IS SPEAKING FOR THE ADMINISTRATION.
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